(3) 165 - Social Security (Seafarers Convention Revised), 1987

(4) 166 - Repatriation of Seafarers Convention (Revised), 1987

India has not ratified any of the above conventions so far. However, these conventions are not treated as Core Labour Standards.

The ILO has identified the following seven conventions as Core Labour Standards :

(1) Forced Labour (No. 29)

(2) Freedom of Association (No. 87)

(3) Right to Collective Bargaining (No. 98)

(4) Equal Remuneration (No. 100)

(5) Abolition of Forced Labour (No. 105)

(6) Discrimination (No. 111)

(7) Minimum Age Convention (No. 138)

India has already ratified conventions no. 29, 100 and 111. ILO convention no. 105 concerning abolition of forced labour is in an advanced stage of processing for ratification.

Conventions no. 87 and 98 require granting certain rights to government servants on par with industrial workers. Since Indian law treats the government servants as a category separate from industrial workers, ratification of ILO conventions no. 87 and 98 would not be possible at this stage. Similarly, there is no omnibus provision in the Indian laws fixing a minimum age for employment. Convention no. 138 covers all sectors of economic activities and all types of employment regardless of whether children are employed for wages or not. The convention also does not set priorities. It is, therefore, not possible at this stage, to ratify convention no. 138.

Global Tenders in Vizag Steel Plants

940. SHRI CHANDRABHUSHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Vizag Steel Plant awarded a contract worth over Rs. 100 crores for importing coal, without inviting global tender;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any enquiry has been conducted in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details and outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) and (b) Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (Visakhapatnam Steel Plant) entered into long term agreement in the year 1995 for a period of 3 years for import of coal from various sources in Australia in accordance with the terms and conditions and specifications of Low Ash Metallurgical Coking Coal approved by the Board of Directors of the Company.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

Pager Services in Major Cities

941. SHRI NAMDEO DIWATHE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the response to introduce pager services in the major cities, present status of the progress achieved so far and target set for the current year with financial target for investment;

(b) the details of expansion plan for pager services;

(c) whether pagers in Indian languages are proposed to be launched shortly; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, language and city-wise?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b) (i) The Department of Telecommunications has issued 106 licences in respect of Radio paging operations in 27 major cities of the country. The number of licensees are between 2 to 5 in a city depending on the size of the city.

(ii) The services is available in all the 27 cities by one or more operators. Number of subscribers to the service are 4,21,721 in these 27 cities as on 31.12.1996.

(iii) As per the licence agreement, the licensees were required to commission the service within one year of the effective date of licence.

(iv) The financial investment is to be done by the licensee company depending on the demand and the expansion programme of the company.

(c) and (d) No request from any of the licensee company has been received for introduction of pager in Indian languages.

However, some of the companies appear to be getting ready for multilingual paging services.

Expansion of Exchanges

942. SHRI P.C. THOMAS :
SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to expand Telephone Exchanges during 1997 and 1998;

(b) if so, the details thereof, district-wise, location-wise;

(c) whether the Government also propose to open new telephone exchanges in the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, district-wise, location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) to (d) Expansion of Telephone Exchanges as well as New Telephone Exchange are planned for each financial year. Detail for 1997-98 are not yet finalised.

Raising of Level of Platforms

943. SHRI SYDAIAH KOTA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to raise the level of Platforms after gauge conversion from Guntur to Macherla and Gunture to Nandyal;

(b) if so, the number of platforms raised so far after conversion in that sector; and

(c) the target set up for raising the remaining platforms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir, except the ones which have already been raised after Gauge Conversion.

(b) Three platforms on Guntur-Macherla section and two platforms on Guntur-Nandyal section have been raised.

(c) Does not arise.

ESI Scheme for Cashew Workers

944. SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the difficulties being faced by the Cashew workers in Kerala due to the stoppage of Employees State Insurance Scheme (ESI) for Cashew workers;

(b) whether the Government propose to take immediate steps to revoke such anti-labour decision and to ensure the benefits of the ESI scheme for the Cashew workers in Kerala; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c) The Cashew workers working in Cashew factories covered under the ESI Act are entitled to ESI benefits as provided under the Scheme. However, a section of Cashew workers are not able to derive sickness benefit because of non-fulfilment of contributory conditions prescribed under the Scheme. The problem of such Cashew workers is under examination of the ESI Corporation. Meanwhile these workers continue to receive other benefits namely, medical benefit, disablement benefit, dependent benefit and maternity benefit under the ESI Scheme.

[Translation]

Mine Accidents

945. PROF. OMPAL SINGH NIDAR :
SHRI DATTA MEGHE :

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been considerable increase in Mine-accidents;

(b) if so, the number and details of Mine accidents reported during this year till date;

(c) the number of persons killed in these accidents;

(d) the amount of compensation given to the families of deceased;

(e) whether any scheme has been formulated for making the mining system more effective mobilising more resources for this sector and using better technology; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (f) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the house.

Revenue Earned by the Government

946. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the total revenue earned by the Government from the tourism sector;

(b) whether discriminatory attitude have been adopted by the Government in regard to development of the tourist places in Bihar; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) The tax revenue earned by the Central Government by way of expenditure tax from tourists during the current financial year upto January 1997 is Rs. 226.93 crores.

(b) No Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Multinational Companies Willing to Invest in Communication

947. SHRI DATTA MEHGE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether some multinational companies are willing to invest in communication sector in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have shown interest in their investment proposals; and